

REMARKS

The present application was filed on August 13, 1999 with claims 1-18. Claims 1 and 15-18 are the independent claims.

Claims 13, 17 and 18 are canceled herein. Claims 1-12 and 14-16 remain pending.

In the Office Action, the Examiner rejected claims 1-11, 15 and 16 under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,418,176 ("Ho"), rejected claims 17 and 18 under §102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,249,542 ("Kohli"), and indicated that claims 12-14 contain allowable subject matter.

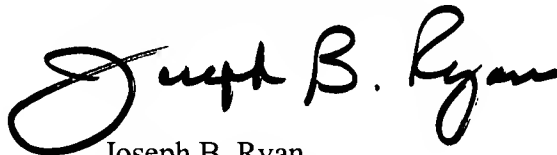
In this response, Applicants amend claims 1, 12 and 14-16, and cancel claims 13, 17 and 18. Applicants respectfully request reconsideration of the present application in view of the following remarks.

The limitations of allowable dependent claim 13 have been incorporated into each of the independent claims 1, 15 and 16. Claims 1, 15 and 16 are therefore believed to be allowable in view of the indication of allowable subject matter.

Allowable dependent claims 12 and 14 have each been rewritten in independent form, and the resulting independent claims are therefore believed to be allowable.

In view of the above, Applicants believe that claims 1-12 and 14-16 as amended are in condition for allowance, and respectfully request withdrawal of the §102(e) rejections.

Respectfully submitted,



Date: September 18, 2003

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